

CAMBRIA STEEL COMPANY,
WEST BOILER HOUSE
(Bethlehem Steel Company,
Pattern Storage Building)
Cambria Iron Works
Lower Works
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-312-D

HAER
PA
11-JOTO,
137D-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CAMBRIA STEEL COMPANY, WEST BOILER HOUSE
(Bethlehem Steel Company, Pattern Storage Building)
Cambria Iron Works

HAER No. PA-312-D

Location: Lower Works, Johnstown, Cambria
County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Johnstown, Pennsylvania

UTM: 17 E.676360 N.446724017

Date of Construction: ca. 1898

Fabricator: unknown

Present Owner: Bethlehem Steel Corporation

Present Use: Pattern storage

Significance: Improvements to the early blast
furnace plant were made in the late
1890s, shortly after the formation
of the Cambria Steel Company,
including the construction of new
boiler houses. Dating from about
1898, the western boiler house, a
steel-frame structure with brick
walls and a brick floor, originally
housed sixteen boilers used in
conjunction with the adjacent
Compressor Engine House. This
facility supplied the Lower Works
with compressed air.

Historian: Gray Fitzsimons

Project Information:

The results of the study of Cambria County were published in
1990: Fitzsimons, Gray, editor, Blair County and Cambria County,
Pennsylvania: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial
Sites (Washington, D.C.: America's Industrial Heritage Project
(AIHP) and HABS/HAER, National Park Service). The contents of the
publication were transmitted to the Library of Congress as
individual reports. Research notes, field photos and copies of
historic photos collected during the project were transmitted to
the AIHP Collection, Special Collections, Stapleton Library,
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15705.

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HISTORY

Nearly identical to the east boiler house, this two-story building contains a steel frame, riveted steel Fink roof trusses, steel columns, which are composed of channel sections and riveted lacing bars, common-bond brick walls, flat-arched door and window openings, many of which are infilled with brick, and a stone foundation. It measures 147' x 42' and parallels the east boiler house. Since the 1930s these two buildings have housed patterns used for foundry castings. None of the boilers survive.

This two-story building was probably erected about 1898 shortly after Cambria Iron was reorganized as the Cambria Steel Company. The company improved its blast furnace plant and compressed air system, replacing the original boiler houses with two brick and steel-frame structures. The western boiler house originally contained sixteen boilers, used in conjunction with the adjacent Compressor Engine House. This facility supplied the Lower Works with compressed air.

When Blast Furnace Nos. 1-4 ceased operation in the 1920s, the Bethlehem Steel Company, owners of the old Cambria Iron Company, demolished the hot-blast stoves and furnaces. The boilers in the two boiler houses were removed and the buildings were subsequently used for pattern storage. Although the nearby Bethlehem foundry that used the patterns ceased operation around 1983, patterns are still stored in both buildings.

SOURCES

Galasso, Ralph. Pattern-Maker, Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Johnstown Plant, Lower Works Division, Interview February 1987.

"Key Plan, Johnstown Plants: February 16, 1923; revised January 26, 1927, March 29, 1930, and February 13, 1939," (copy available at the Canal Museum, Center for Canal History and Technology, Easton, Pennsylvania).

Sanborn Map Company, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1891 and 1911.